

The Nationalism of Calhoun

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The Nationalism of Calhoun.

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John Calhoun has won his place in American history as the chief advocate of State Rights, and to the person who has not read beyond the ordinary school texts, he does not present any tendencies toward what may be called Nationalism. A superficial study of the South Carolina trouble of 1832 often causes the opinion to prevail that Calhoun and his followers wanted to destroy the Constitution when in fact they were standing for the Constitution as they understood it. There were few people in the United States who did not venerate the Constitution as they understood it. Webster and Calhoun worshipped that great document but every student of history knows that both men were diametrically opposed to each other in the interpretation of its provisions, especially regarding a strong central government and the sovereignty of the states. It is the purpose of this thesis to bring out the national traits of Mr. Calhoun's political career.

From the very beginning of our National Government under the Constitution there were two parties. One party favored a broad construction of the Constitution so that the Government could do many things not specifically spoken of in the provisions of that instrument, and in justice to that school it may be said that they did not want to do anything more

than strong governments had done before ours came into existence. The other party desired to adhere to the strict letter of the Constitution. They were jealous of the liberties guaranteed there, and they knew that if there was much reading between the lines there would probably be no halt in the march toward a strong central government. In short, they were anxious lest the reserved powers of the states should be little by little reduced. This conflict of opinion came out in the question of the Alien and Sedition Laws, and caused the States Rights Strict Construction Party to formulate its views in a more tangible form in the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions. The Jeffersonian party then was directly opposed to the program of the party in power before 1801 because it was believed that the Federalist party had usurped powers for the General Government and that it was leading away from the most excellent system provided for in that compact so-called --The Constitution of the United States.

In 1801, Mr. Jefferson and his party came into power. "A condition and not a theory" confronted them, and such has been the case with every strict construction administration since that time. Practice has revealed that the general Government of necessity must sometimes deviate from the strict interpretation idea if it is to maintain any dig-

nity at all or any force. A written document cannot provide for everything or foresee every emergency, however keen and intelligent the author's of that instrument may have been. The Republicans from 1801 to 1825 were always respectful to strict construction whenever it was possible, but Strict Construction ideas did not prevent Jefferson from purchasing Louisiana or the establishment of a United States Bank in 1816.

The Federalists after their dismissal from power criticized the Democratic-Republicans for policies contrary to the Constitution, and in many respects they became the party of Strict Construction. By 1812 the Democratic-Republican party was the great national party and it was drawing to itself the young blood of the nation. Under its rule the country had extended its boundaries and the interests of the people were directed to foreign affairs and an approaching war with either Great Britain or France. When Calhoun entered Congress in 1811, there was no absorbing tariff or slavery question to divide the country into sections. The chief political issues were binding the people into one nation united against foreign aggression.

When Calhoun entered Congress he was placed on the Committee on Foreign Relations and there he did admirable service. It was the general belief that more trouble was inevitable for the United States, and that some preparations

ought to be made by increasing the army and war equipment of the nation. The Committee on Foreign Relations had reported a resolution which favored an increase in the army and on Dec. 12, 1811, Calhoun delivered a speech favoring the resolution. He said: "Which shall we do, abandon or defend our own commercial and maritime rights, and the personal liberties of our citizens employed in exercising them? These rights are vitally attacked, and war is the only means of redress."¹ In this speech Calhoun's nationalism is apparent and one would never suspect that he would in the future support "Nullification."

There was much opposition to the Embargo and this opposition was shown in part by a petition of the citizens of Albany to repeal that measure. Their reference was to the Sixty-day Embargo of April 4, 1812. Mr. Calhoun, although opposed to the Restrictive System as a principle favored this temporary Embargo because he considered it a measure preliminary to war, and in closing his address he said, "Sir, I assert it with confidence, a war, just and necessary in its origin, wisely and vigorously carried on, and honorably terminated, would establish the integrity and prosperity of our country for centuries." He characterized the struggle as the second struggle for our liberty.²

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1. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 1-13.
 2. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 13-20.

On May 29, 1812 Representative John Randolph of Virginia who opposed Calhoun so often, submitted the following proposition: "That under present circumstances, it is inexpedient to resort to a war with Great Britain."³ This resolution was defeated and Calhoun's vote helped do it. Consistent with his previous acts and professions, Calhoun voted for the Declaration of War against Great Britain. In pursuing this course he was supported by his own state and the country at large. While the war was in progress, the Legislature of South Carolina passed two resolutions showing its attitude toward the administration of James Madison, and the settlement of the difficulty with England. The resolutions said that James Madison had by his energetic prosecution of the war furnished a new claim to the confidence of his fellow citizens and that indemnity for our wrongs and satisfactory security for our rights as a nation were the only terms on which an honorable peace could be bottomed.⁴ The Administration received unqualified support from John Calhoun and his native state as far as the prosecution of the war with England was concerned. Yet the Administration and Calhoun did not always agree on details as will be shown later. Calhoun was always proud of his course in that memorable war and he was always pleased to speak of it in years

3. Niles Register, Vol. 2, p. 235.

4. Niles Register, Vol. 5, p. 357.

after. His record in that respect was a political asset to him. The legislature of South Carolina gave that as one of its reasons for supporting him for president.⁵ He opposed the almost disloyal Federalists for their course in that war although they went no further, if as far, as South Carolina was to go in 1832. War is a good test of fidelity to a government but it does not prove so much in the case of Calhoun as far as his belief in the principles of Nationalism is concerned. It would have been possible for him to adhere to the theory of state rights and yet be a strong nationalist on the question of war. The Constitution of the United States gives Congress plain and definite power to declare war. There is no question or doubt about it such as there was in connection with the protective tariff, United States Bank or Internal Improvements. These questions presented themselves for solution as soon as the war was over.

The Restrictive System had caused capital to seek other channels than commerce. As a result manufacturing had largely increased. The Restrictive System was a war measure in its nature and as soon as the war was over the manufacturers were anxious to know what was going to be done to prevent British goods from flooding the country. In other words,

5. Niles' Register, Vol. 25, p. 243.

there was the tariff problem. In 1811 the United States failed to recharter the United States Bank because of the prevailing prejudice against it. Many feared the bugaboo of British gold, and preferred to get along without a bank and leave the matter to the states. The war, however, showed a need for a good banking institution that would insure safety and uniformity. There was then a bank question. People were beginning to recognize the utility of good roads for purposes of quick communication and travel. A war will always bring to light the defects or good qualities of a country in the matter of communication. Then trade was developing. Consequently there was the problem of internal improvements. What was Calhoun's position on these questions?

Calhoun desired to get rid of the Restrictive System as soon as possible. This Restrictive System (i.e. Embargo and Non-Intercourse) was a policy of the Administration, and was one of its favorite measures. Under certain conditions he favored the enforcement of the Non-Importation Act as a war measure and further he wanted it enforced if it was to remain law⁶ but on April, 1814, he came out against the system in a speech delivered on the sixth of that month.

6. Annals of Congress, 12th Congress, 2nd Session, p 1111.

He was still chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations and his words naturally would carry great weight. He favored the repeal of the Restricting System. The circumstances had changed for all Europe was now open to England. Suppose we were to persist in the measure, does anyone believe that England will feel the policy as she did when the Continent was shut? Certainly not. He believed that we should attach the friendship of Russia, Sweden, Holland, Denmark and of all other nations who have a deep interest in free trade, to the cause of America. He favored protection for the manufacturing interests and he hoped they would be protected with care.⁷ This was the tenor of his speech and this with other remarks on the tariff caused Mr. Calhoun to make some explanations of his stand on that question when he was busily engaged in fighting the Tariffs of 1828 and 1833.

On April 6, 1816--just two years after the foregoing address, Calhoun delivered in the House of Representatives, a speech on the New Tariff Bill. He still favored Protection but I do not doubt that he meant a mild protection and not the protection advocated by the friends of the so-called "American System" which was later fathered by Henry Clay. Mr. Calhoun realized that we were entering on a new era. He

7. Niles Register, Vol. 6, p. 122.

believed that manufacturing would excite an increased attention to Internal Improvements and bind our country closer together.⁸ I believe that his position on the Tariff was correct and that he was right in wishing to repeal the restrictive legislation which really acted as an extremely high protective tariff.⁹ This in itself would show that Calhoun would not favor a high protective tariff. He was in his early days a friend of moderate protection. The heavy debt contracted during the war made it necessary that the duties be on an average of about twenty per cent.¹⁰ South Carolina as well as most of the South, which was not a manufacturing state and which gave no particular promise of becoming one, gave her support to the tariff of 1816. Mr. Calhoun in a speech delivered Feb. 15, 1833, did not deny that he had given his support to the Tariff of 1816, but he said that he did it on the ground that it was a tariff for revenue and not for protection. He denied that he was the author of the protective system. He said in this same speech "I came into Congress in 1812, devoted friend and supporter of the then administration, yet one of my first efforts was to brave the administration by opposing its favorite measure, the restrictive system embargo, non-intercourse, and all and that upon the principle of free trade. The system

8. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 163-173.

9. Taussig's Tariff History, p. 17.

10. Taussig's Tariff History, p. 19.

remained in fashion for a time, but after the overthrow of Bonaparte, I reported a bill from the Committee on Foreign Relations to repeal the whole system of restrictive measures. While the bill was under consideration a worthy man, then a member of the House (Mr. M'Kim of Baltimore) moved to except the non-importation Act, which he supported on the ground of encouragement to manufacturers. I resisted the motion on the very grounds on which Mr. M'Kim supported it. I maintained that the manufacturers were then receiving too much protection, and warned its friends that the withdrawal of the protection which the war and the high duties then afforded would cause great embarrassment, and that the true policy, in the meantime, was to admit foreign goods as freely as possible in order to diminish the anticipated embarrassment on the return of peace; intimating at the same time, my desire to see the tariff revised, with a view of affording a moderate and permanent protection. Such was my conduct before 1816."¹¹

Of course Mr. Calhoun could have justified his stand on the tariff on the principle of a tariff for revenue only because as was said before, the government had contracted a large debt during the war and needed the money to pay the interest on the debt. Men who believe in free trade have

11. Calhoun's works, Vol. 2, p. 211.

to alter their principles to suit the circumstances just as protectionists would have to do under certain conditions. Professor Taussig says in speaking of the Tariff of 1816, "The control of the policy of Congress at that time was in the hands of a knot of young men of the rising generation, who brought about the war and felt in a measure responsible for its results. There was a strong feeling among these that the manufacturing establishments which had grown up during the war should be assisted. There was little feeling however, either in Congress or among the people, such as appeared in later years, in favor of a permanent strong protective policy. These and some other distinctly protective provisions were defended by Calhoun, mainly on the ground of the need of making provision for the exigencies of another war; and on that ground they were adopted, and at the same time limited."¹² i.e. in time.

Whether one calls Calhoun a friend of free trade or a protectionist, he was not at this time so wedded to one view that he could not adjust himself to the conditions. He had national spirit enough to realize that the finances of the Federal government could not suffer, and he was patriotic enough to consider other sections besides his own state. Mr. Hunt quotes Calhoun as saying in his first speech in

12. Taussig's Tariff History, p. 18.

Congress, "I am not here to represent my own state alone. I renounce the idea, and I will show by my vote, that I contend for the interests of the whole people of this community."¹³ The people of South Carolina undoubtedly did not fear any harm from that schedule of duties and it was not until about 1818 that Calhoun's state became uneasy over the increasing demands of protectionists.

After the war of 1812 the financial affairs of the Nation were in a bad condition. The country was burdened with a war debt, and commerce and trade were crippled for the lack of specie. Sentiment was now changing in regard to a United States Bank and in the year following the war a bill was passed by Congress to reestablish the Bank of the United States, but the President not being satisfied with the measure, vetoed it and the question was left open for further debate. There was much talk about the constitutionality of a bank. On Feb. 3, 1814, Calhoun proposed the following motion: "Resolved, That the Committee of Ways and Means be instructed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a National Bank, to be located in the District of Columbia."¹⁴ Calhoun believed that a bank in the District of Columbia was undoubtedly constitutional. But the bank

13. Hunt's Calhoun, p. 24.

14. Niles Register, Vol. 5, pp. 403-404.

issue was not finally disposed of till 1816. Mr. Calhoun was opposed to paper money as the only money, and he was alarmed at the monetary condition of the Nation. In a speech delivered Feb. 26, 1816, on the Bill to establish a National Bank, he said that the power was given to Congress by the Constitution in express terms to regulate the currency of the United States. "In point of fact," he said, "that power through given to Congress is not in their hands. Gold and silver have disappeared entirely. There is no money but paper money, and that money is beyond the control of Congress." He said that the states could not regulate this depreciated paper currency for this power was intended to be given exclusively to Congress. He admitted there was no provision in the constitution by which the states were prohibited from creating banks. A National Bank would bring uniformity in many ways. "What was a bank? An institution under present uses, to make money. What was the instinct of such an institution? Gain, gain, nothing but gain. Banks must change their nature." He went on to say that the banks have in a great measure a control over the press, for proof of which he referred to the fact that the present wretched state of the circulating medium had scarcely been denounced by a single paper within the United States.¹⁵

15, Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 153-162.

Since 1811 the Banking business had been in the hands of the states and one can imagine how impossible it was to have uniformity without some definite understanding among all the states. This point could be reached only through the medium of the National Government. Mr. Calhoun saw this and desired to put the country on a sound financial basis, and he believed that a National Bank could help bring about this state. He believed that there was a constitutional method of establishing a United States Bank. He went further than Mr. Jefferson went in 1791 when the first United States Bank was established. Mr. Jefferson considered the measure as unconstitutional but in times of necessity the party of Jefferson had changed its position in regard to the Bank and Mr. Calhoun's Nationalism was great enough to see that implied power was given to Congress to establish such an institution. Mr. Calhoun was not yet making fine distinctions. He was very practical in his views concerning the implied powers of Congress. In fact, as will appear later, he was far more liberal in some of his views than many members of his own political party.

The Bank Bill passed the House of Representatives March 14, 1816, by a vote of 80 to 71. Calhoun and Clay supported it while Randolph and Webster opposed the measure. A large majority of the Republican party voted for the Bill, influ-

enced no doubt by the peculiar circumstances of the time. Calhoun as chairman of the Committee of the Currency in 1816 was the supporter of the measure which established a Bank with a capital of \$35,000,000 and to him must be given a large share of the credit in placing the nation on a good monetary basis.

Calhoun showed himself a broad constructionist in his support of Internal Improvements. The record shows that he went beyond the views of Madison in that respect. Both Federalists and Republicans desired to see our country improved but two things generally caused agitation--expense and constitutionality. Only the parsimonious were frightened at the former and probably many used the latter as a shield against spending money for internal improvements, but many men seriously doubted that Congress had the power to make such improvements.

When the government rechartered the United States Bank, it reserved one fifth of the stock for itself, consequently the Government would get dividends from this stock. How was this money to be spent? A bill was introduced to set aside the Bank Dividends and bonus as a permanent fund for the construction of roads and canals. Mr. Calhoun gave his support to this measure and on Febr. 4, 1817, he delivered an address on the subject in the House of Representatives. In

part he said: "Thus situated, to what can we direct our resources and attention more important than internal improvements. What can add more to the wealth, the strength, and the political prosperity of our country? In fact if we look into the nature of wealth we will find ~~that~~ nothing can be more favorable to its growth than good roads and canals. Let it not be said that internal improvements may be wholly left to the enterprise of the states and of individuals. Let us then bind the republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals." Calhoun goes on to say that such improvements will help keep us from disunion. He sees no constitutional obstacles. He desired to see perfect communication from Main to Louisiana. He also wanted to see the Lakes connected with the Hudson River.¹⁶

Calhoun evidently recognized the national importance of roads and canals. They were not merely local and state affairs. While Calhoun was later forced to take somewhat different ground on the constitutionality of Internal Improvements, especially after 1825, he never lost sight of their often being too great for any one state to handle, and he never reached the point, as far as I have been able to discover, where he denied the right of the Central Government to support and control internal improvements of a

16. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 186-196.

certain nature and magnitude.

As late as Nov. 13, 1845, he said on taking the chair of the Southwestern Convention at Memphis that he favored the proper development of the Mississippi River as a channel of commerce, and he said that the Mississippi and its tributaries should be under the supervision of the General Government. He said that it was too great a task for the states. As for railroads the power of the General government was more questionable. "The General Government has no right to appropriate money except to carry into execution its delegated powers and that I do not regard the system of railroads or Internal Improvements as comprehended under them. The General Government may grant lands (alternate sections for example) in aid of such improvements." He said he had voted for such grants in Congress, "Acting on that principle, I cheerfully, as President of the Senate, gave the casting vote in favor of an act granting alternate sections to the canal intended to connect Lake Michigan with the Mississippi through the Illinois River."¹⁷

In 1831, in a letter dated Fort Hill, Aug. 5, Calhoun wrote to Christopher Van Deventer that he had no doubt of the great importance of the subject of Internal Improvements and within proper limits its constitutionality; but he

17. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 6, pp. 273-284.

thought experience had abundantly shown that the system could not stand on a solid, or satisfactory basis without the insertion of an express provision authorizing its exercise and guarding against its abuses.¹⁸

The bill of 1817 entitled "An Act to set apart and pledge certain funds for internal improvements" was passed by Congress but it was vetoed by President Madison the day before he left the Presidential chair, March 3, 1817. The House reconsidered it and Calhoun voted to pass the measure over the President's veto, but it failed to pass.¹⁹ This event shows Calhoun's ardor for internal improvements in the early days of his public career and his apparent indifference to fine constitutional objections or strict construction.

In 1817 Calhoun became Secretary of War in the Administration of Mr. Monroe. His new position made him even more aware of good highways of commerce and travel. On Jan. 14, 1819, his report on Roads and Canals was communicated to the House of Representatives. In part this report said: "A judicious system of roads and canals, constructed for the convenience of commerce, and the transportation of the mail only, without any reference to military operations, is itself among the most efficient means for the more complete defense

18. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 296-297.

19. Niles Register, Vol. 12, pp. 25-26.

of the United States. " He went on to say: There is no country to which a good system of military roads and canals is more indispensable than to the United States." The next sentences I have noted shows that Calhoun made a distinction between local and national improvements. "Much undoubtedly remains to be done to perfect the roads and improve the navigation of the rivers but this for the most part may be safely left to the states, and the commercial cities particularly interested, as the appropriate objects of their care and exertions." ... "Very different is the case with the great and important line of communication, extending along the coast, through the Atlantic States. No object of the kind is more important and there is none to which state or individual capacity is more inadequate. It must be perfected by the General Government or not be perfected at all, at least for many years." In this report Calhoun declined to discuss the constitutional question. 20

In 1845, in the speech before the Memphis Convention he believed the General Government could help indirectly by granting alternate sections of land to railroads under construction but it must be remembered that many years before that convention he had come to the conclusion that an amendment to the Constitution was necessary to place internal im-

provements by the General Government on a solid and permanent basis.

Calhoun's time was now consumed in the duties of Secretary of War and by reading his reports and letters it is clear that he was moved by a broad national spirit in his work in the war Department. In a speech delivered Jan. 31, 1816, on the motion to repeal the direct Tax, a motion which Calhoun opposed because the government needed the money) he uttered many sentiments which characterized the spirit of his work as Secretary in his department. He prophesied trouble with England and he advocated an adequate navy to defend our country. He desired the improvement of the militia and the extension of their term of service. He said, they were "the true force of the country." He believed our coast ought to be fortified and he advocated the establishment of roads and canals. They could be used for military purposes.²¹ This address would indicate that Calhoun was the man to fill the important place he occupied in the Cabinet of Monroe. It was under his administration that the Military Academy at West Point was put on a solid foundation.

It was while he was in that position that slavery began to assume a somewhat prophetic form, yet it did not occupy his mind very much in a public way. If he had been in Cong-

21. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, pp. 135-153.

ress there is no doubt but that he would have made at least one important speech on the subject of the Missouri Compromise. That the contest in Congress gave him some concern is shown in a letter to John Ewing Calhoun under date of Jan. 8, 1821. "I still hope" he wrote, "Missouri will be admitted before the end of the session and that a question which has so deeply agitated this country will be settled forever."²² Nevertheless the Missouri Question seems to have dampened Calhoun's enthusiastic optimism with respect to the future of the Union. In the conversations which he had about this time with John Quincy Adams, who was Secretary of State, he exhibits for the first time a certain depression and uneasiness. He apparently saw that a change was coming. He was not alone in his alarm for Mr. Adams himself was uneasy lest the life of the Union should be soon destroyed.²³ The following incident exemplifies this spirit.

On February 24, 1820, Mr. Adams had some conversation with Calhoun on the slave question pending in Congress. Mr. Calhoun said he did not think it would produce a dissolution of the Union, but if it should the South would be from necessity compelled to form an alliance offensive and defensive with Great Britain. Mr. Adams said that would be returning to the colonial state. He said yes, pretty much,

22. Calhoun's Correspondence, p. 181.

23. Adams Memoirs, Vol. 4, p. 495.

but it would be forced upon them. Adams asked him whether he thought, if by the effect of this alliance, offensive and defensive, the population of the North should be cut off from its natural outlet upon the ocean, it would fall back upon its rocks bound hand and foot to starve or whether it would not retain its powers of locomotion to move southward by land. Then he said, they would find it necessary to make their communities all military. Adams pressed the conversation no further but it led him into deep reflection.²⁴

The slavery question was causing all thoughtful men to be concerned. But that [#]Calhoun was not very strict in his interpretation of the Constitution is shown by the answer to Monroe's question whether Congress could prohibit slavery in the territories. Calhoun believed that Congress had that authority to exclude slavery from the territories although he could not (according to Mr. Adams) find any express power to that effect in the constitution.²⁵ The Secretary of War was a slave-holder, and this opinion expressed in Monroe's Cabinet shows that Calhoun was not yet convinced that slavery would assume the importance it finally obtained in his later life. He evidently believed that Congress

Calhoun favored the Missouri Compromise.

24. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 4, pp. 530-531.

25. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 5, pp. 4-9.

had the power to keep slavery from the territories whether or not he as a slaveholder would have it so. He surely did not permit prejudice to rule him in that decision. Mr. Calhoun did not become solicitous about the existence of slavery until the Abolitionists of the North began to threaten slavery where it already had a foothold. He believed that slavery was a beneficent institution especially for states like South Carolina. No white person, according to his opinion, could descend to manual labor. However, manufacturing and mechanical labor were not degrading and white people could easily indulge in such without lowering their standing and dignity. He believed that farming was one of the most excellent occupations of life and he as well as his father had often held the plough, but as for ordinary manual labor, no white person could descend to that. Society based on slavery was the best guarantee to equality among the whites. It produced an unvarying level among them. It not only did not excite but did not even admit of inequalities by which one white man could domineer over another." When Mr. Calhoun spoke about rights of the people he did not mean the colored slaves to be included as the recipients of those privileges. Such were Mr. Calhoun's views.²⁶

His ideas of a political state were somewhat like those of Aristotle who had to deal with the problem of slavery.

26. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 5, p. 10.

also, and who wrote "the first scientific discussion of the institution in extant literature."²⁷ Aristotle argued for slavery as a natural institution in the state. Mr. Calhoun believed that slavery was essential to South Carolina.

I have entered into detail concerning his views on slavery to make all the plainer his liberal ideas of the #power of the General Government over slavery in the territories.

Calhoun was an expansionist. He favored the purchase of Florida and believed it would be a good thing for the south, especially. He favored bringing Cuba into the United States even at the cost of a war with England if she meant to take that island. He believed that the passion for aggrandizement was the law paramount of man in society and he thought that there would be no separation of the U. S. if we should make settlements on the Pacific coast.²⁸ He was in sympathy with the Monroe doctrine, also. Sectionalism was an abhorance to him. He was not considered a sectional at least till the Tariff discussion of 1828. He believed that the United States Bank would help bring about uniformity in our money system. He thought that internal

He later changed his liberal views.

27. Dunning's Political Theories, p. 58.

28. Adams' Memoirs. Vol. 6, pp. 70, 138 and 251.

improvements would bind our country closer together and I believe he was right in advocating them for that reason. In his report to Congress Dec. 3, 1824, he wrote that our country as it then existed was naturally divided topographically into three parts--first the strip of territory along the Atlantic coast and back as far as the Allegheny Mountains second, the country in the region of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes and third, the Great Mississippi Valley. The Act of Congress of April 20, 1824, authorized the President "to cause the necessary surveys, plans and estimates to be made of the routes of such roads and canals as he may deem of national importance in a commercial or military point of view, or necessary to the transportation of the public mails" In his report, Mr. Calhoun put special emphasis on the words "National Importance" and in determining what routes for roads and canals were of national importance, he adverted to the Constitution in its distribution of powers and duties between the General and state Governments. In thus regarding our system it was conceived that all these routes of roads and canals which might be fairly considered as falling within the province of any particular state however useful they might be in a commercial or political view, or to the transportation of the mail, were excluded from the provisions of the act."²⁹

29. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 5, pp 137-147.

Then what were routes of National Importance? They were the roads and canals that were to connect the three great sections of country just spoken of. An example was the Cumberland Road begun in Mr. Jefferson's Administration or a route for a canal from Washington D. C. by the Potomac to the Ohio River and on to Lake Erie. Mr. Calhoun though national in his tendency always recognized the constitutional rights of the state and had great respect for them. An intense sectionalist would not have cared to see the country bound together by routes of easy travel and communication.

He voted as has been said for a moderate protection to manufacturers in 1816, although his community was not a manufacturing state. He was not considered a sectionalist by his own state in 1823 for the South Carolina Legislature endorsed him for President because of his "distinguished talents", his devotion to the general administration, "his superiority to local views and sectional principles." The Resolution stated also other commendable features of his public career including "his zeal and energy in promoting the Declaration and prosecuting of our late war with Britain"³⁰ After giving up his duties as Secretary of War Mr. Calhoun spent the summer in the south where he attended many public dinners given in his honor. His address at Augusta, Georgia, June 25, 1825, states plainly his views on sectionalism. He

30. Niles' Register, Vol. 25, p. 243.

said, "No one would reprobate more pointedly than myself, any concerted scism between states for interested or sectional objects. I would consider all such concert as against the spirit of our constitution, which was intended to bind all of the states in one common bond of union and friendship³¹

Mr. Calhoun's record has now been discussed in a brief way up to the year 1825. He had been in National political life nearly fifteen years. He helped with all his might the war with Great Britain; He advocated a national bank, though he believed the power was the least clear of those given Congress by the Constitution. he voted for the Tariff of 1816 because he realized and appreciated the circumstances of our country and its industries; he advocated internal improvements by the General Government acting within its constitutional power as he understood it; he was an expansionist and he said Congress had the power to exclude slavery from the territories and lastly he was opposed to sectionalism. If he had died in 1825 he would not have been the "Nullifier" of History. We probably would not have heard so much of his career but he undoubtedly would have been ranked along with statesmen of National tendencies.

If Mr. Calhoun had been in Congress instead of in the office of Secretary of War, it would not be so difficult

31. Niles' Register, Vol. 28, p. 267.

to trace the changes in his attitude toward the tariff which more than any one public affair caused him to assume so doubtful and questionable a position in the eyes of the Nationalists. Adams' Memoirs throw some light on the problem but Mr. Adams was often prejudiced in his estimates of his contemporaries and consequently one must carefully sift the evidence found there. Mr. Monroe was inaugurated for a second term, March 4, 1821 and he discussed the inaugural address in a cabinet meeting two or three days before the inauguration. It is said that Monroe made some statements favorable to the manufacturing interests and that Mr. Calhoun objected to them. These expressions were then slightly modified.³²

This incident seems to show that Calhoun was becoming dissatisfied with the increasing demands of the protectionists as early as 1821. Already his native state was beginning to grow uneasy and in December, 1820, the Legislature passed resolutions unfavorable to the tariff proposed at the preceding session of Congress.³³ Mr. Monroe[#] submitted his last regular message to his cabinet for discussion and Mr. Calhoun again objected to an expression in the message which declared the agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests of the country to be in a flourishing condition. He

Dec. 1824

32. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 5, p. 309

33. Niles' Register, Vol. 19, pp. 345-346.

said all the agriculture of the South was in a state of great depression never greater. He wished the gratulatory tone of the message to be qualified.³⁴

Here is what Monroe said in the message as submitted to Congress, December 7, 1824: "Our revenue under the mild system of impost and tonnage continues to be adequate to all the purposes of the government. Our agriculture, commerce, manufactures and navigation flourish."³⁵ Whether Monroe made any change I have not been able to discover but from the message alone a stranger to our country could easily believe that what the President said would apply to the United States at large.

According to Mr. Adams, Calhoun was a friend to internal improvements all through the Monroe Administration and that the cause of internal improvements was constantly acquiring strength until it culminated in the Act of April, 1824. All this took place in spite of the opposition of Mr. Monroe.^{# 36}

No doubt sentiment in the South was turning against the tariff especially and Internal Improvements by 1824, and objections in some quarters had been made against Calhoun because of his national tendencies in advocating Int-

Monroe in 1822 vetoed a bill to repair and operate the Cumberland Road.

34. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 432.

35. Messages and Papers of the Presidents Vol. 2, p. 248.

36. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 8, p. 233.

ernal Improvements and a United States Bank. This was a presidential year and he evidently wanted to have the people's minds clear concerning his position on these great questions. He wrote a letter dated July 3, 1824 to Congressman Robert S. Garnett of Virginia explaining his ideas on the Constitution and answering some of the objections against him. As to the Constitution he believed in no set rule of construction. He believed that any passage must be construed according to the meaning of the framers of that instrument. He said he felt profound respect for the rights of the states. He in part further wrote: "For example, I am accused of advocating the power of Congress to incorporate a National Bank, but those who make the accusation, and who profess to admire Mr. Madison and Mr. Jefferson, seem to forget that I had the weight of authority with me." He pointed out the fact that Madison signed the Bank Bill of 1816 and that Jefferson approved of a bill which extended a branch of the first Bank of the United States to New Orleans. "I felt satisfied that the power existed but at the same time respected those who took the opposite view, for I have always considered the power the least clear of those which have been exercised by Congress. I rested the argument for its passage on the necessity of restoring specie payments at the time of the legal currency of the United States had

ceased to circulate, and to regulate, or to fix the value of that which did circulate." He said that it was again objected to him that he was as friend to the system of internal improvements. Here again he could cover himself by the same authority. Madison, Jefferson, and Monroe, again and again approved of bills for internal improvements.³⁷ The grand exception for Madison of course was the bill he vetoed just before he left office in 1817.

Therefore Mr Calhoun in writing to a Virginia congressman pointed to the sons of Virginia as authority for what he did. I really believe, however, that Calhoun was more liberal than any one of the three especially on Internal Improvements, that his citations in that respect were a little stretched probably for political purposes. It is noticeable that he says nothing about the tariff in this letter.

In an address delivered at Abbeville, South Carolina, May 27, 1825, Mr. Calhoun reviewed his record while in Congress and did not repudiate a single great measure he supported. He said his community had nobly sustained all these measures. He was in the main correct. He said that his principles remained unchanged and in this new position his principles of action remained the same.³⁸ However, Calhoun

37. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 219-223.

38. Niles' Register, Vol. 28, pp. 265-267.

and his own state legislature were not exactly together on the question of Internal Improvements in 1825. On Jan. 13, 1825, a few months before this address was delivered the Senate of the State passed a resolution as follows: "Resolved That Congress does not possess the power, under the Constitution, to adopt a general system of internal improvements, as a national measure." Another resolution of the same set declared a protective tariff unconstitutional.³⁹ These passed the Senate by a vote of 30 to 13 and a year later they in substance passed both Houses.⁴⁰ It is my belief from the investigation that I have made that South Carolina as a state reached the point of definite opposition before Calhoun, himself, came out boldly. While Calhoun in the summer of 1825 is talking about his record in Congress and in the cabinet and the unsurpassed system of government, definite opposing sentiments are being uttered in South Carolina to the tariff and other issues that have played a prominent part in our National Government. As late as 1831, Calhoun said he had no doubt of the constitutionality of Internal Improvements within proper limits but as I have quoted before he believed an amendment necessary to place them on a solid, permanent basis⁴¹ and he was right for an amend-

ment would have taken the subject largely out of controversy

39. Niles' Register, Vol. 27, pp. 338-339.

40. Niles' Register, Vol. 29, p. 293.

41. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 296-297

By the close of 1820 Mr. Calhoun thought that the manufacturers were on a pretty firm foundation⁴² and this opinion joined with the objection that he made to that subject in Mr. Monroe's message makes it pretty certain that he favored no further increase in protection. His state opposed the proposed tariff of 1820 which was defeated in the Senate and from that time the Southern leaders opposed with all their strength the demands of the Protectionists.

New England was gradually changing from a "Free Trade" section to a firm friend of protection. As the commercial and importing interests of New England lost comparative strength in the battle with the growing manufacturing interests the votes of New England congressmen began to be cast for protection. This change of principle began to be evident by 1820, and when 1828 was reached that section was firmly allied with the protective tariff and together with the support of the Agricultural States of the West and Middle West made the protective principle paramount in the nation. The details of the tariff controversy are very complex and have no place in this paper but some phases of the subject will have to be noticed.

The South was not receiving any manufacturing establishments within its borders. The institution of slavery was

42. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 5, pp. 408-411.

in itself sufficient to keep out foreign immigration and free labor. The South was an agricultural country and as such desired to sell in the dearest markets and buy in the cheapest. Since no articles were manufactured in that section of the country it was necessary to buy the finished products either in Europe or the North, and if the manufacturers were protected, it meant that the prices of goods the South would have to buy would be raised with no corresponding increase in the selling price of cotton. As Professor Taussig says "Cotton was not yet king and the South was not yet sure that its staple was indispensable for all the world. While the export of cotton on a large scale had begun, it was feared that England, in retaliation for high duties on English goods might tax or exclude American cotton."⁴³

By 1824 the cotton industry was on a firm basis and was almost in an independent position but the woolen interests were still clamoring for recognition. In 1827 a bill to protect woolen goods was introduced in Congress. It recognized the minimum principle which had been applied to cottons. This bill succeeded in getting through the House, but it was defeated by the casting vote of Mr. Calhoun who was President of the Senate. He had the power of life and death in his hands and dealt the protective principle a tempor-

43. Taussig's Tariff History, p. 73.

ary blow.

This temporary defeat did not, however, discourage the friends of protection. In the summer of 1827 a convention was held at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It was not only a convention to discuss wool and woolens but it considered all the industries which were supposed to need protection. This gathering attracted the attention of the entire country and it was closely watched by the opponents of the Woolen Bill.

The Vice-President wrote to James Edward Calhoun that summer his opinion on that convention and the tariff. He in part wrote: "The wisest men of the country have divided in opinion, how far Congress has the power and admitting they possess it, how far on principle, encouragement may be given to domestic manufactures as connected with the great consideration of the defense and independence of the country. In the meantime the South has commenced with remonstrating against this unjust and oppressive attempt to sacrifice their interest; and I do trust, that they will not be provoked to step beyond strict constitutional remedies."⁴⁴ In this letter Calhoun characterized the Harrisburg Convention as a scheme and he further spoke of the geographical interests of the country as not being sufficiently guarded. He felt that a government in order to be just must take into consideration all sections of the country. While a protec-

44. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 247-251.

tive tariff might be of help and assistance to the North he felt and believed that it was an injury to South Carolina. In a letter written home May 4, 1828, from Washington, he said he felt confident it was one of the great instruments of their impoverishment and if persisted in must reduce them to poverty, or compel them to an entire change of industry.⁴⁵ When this last letter was written the Tariff of 1828 was about to be passed and it was creating intense excitement in South Carolina and Calhoun did not condemn this excitement. Do not believe that Calhoun was opposed to tariffs as tariffs. He did believe, however, in considering the circumstances of the case. Undoubtedly he was influenced by economic conditions. He believed and perhaps justly that the tariff was hurting his state by injuring the sale of its chief product and compelling it to pay far more than its share of the revenue to the General Government. If the operation of the tariff could have been suspended in South Carolina by the government no complaint would have come from the Southern leaders. Mr. Calhoun realized that this was the weak part of our system, the inability to make all laws give justice to all parts of the country at large.

Mr. Calhoun in a letter to James Monroe, July 10, 1828, brings out his discontent concerning the unequal pressure of

45. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 264-265.

the laws on all parts of the Union. He spoke of the feelings which the tariff of that year had excited in South Carolina and the other Southern states, and the almost universal embarrassment among the people of the staple states which they attributed to the tariff. He said, however, that their attachment to the Union remained unshaken as far as the great body of citizens were concerned. "Yet it cannot be disguised that the system pushed to the present extreme acts most unequally in its pressure on the several parts, which of necessity has a most pernicious tendency on the feelings of the oppressed portions. I greatly fear that the weak part of our system will be found to consist in the fact that in a country of such vast extent and diversity of interest, many of the laws will be found to act very unequally and that some portions of the country may be enriched by legislation at the expense of others. It seems to me that we have no other check against abuses, but such as grow out of responsibility, or elections, and while this is an effectual check, where the law acts equally in all, it is none in the case of the unequal action to which I refer. One thing seems to me certain, that the system is getting wrong and if a speedy and effective remedy be not applied a shock at no long interval may be expected."⁴⁶

46. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 266-267.

It was not many months after the foregoing letter that the South Carolina Exposition came forth and Calhoun was probably at that time preparing his draft of that memorable document. He realized that a grave and serious condition was confronting the country. He was fully aware of the sectional nature of the controversy, and that it might lead to disunion, was in the minds of more than one man. Governor Taylor of South Carolina in an address delivered July 4th 1828, recognized the tyranny of the tariff but he did not countenance disunion. He said unqualifiedly: "Shame on the man that would encourage a disunion."⁴⁷

Mr. Calhoun believed that a law which was unjust in its operation on any section of the country was not really in accordance with the spirit of our constitution and he believed that there was a constitutional remedy to protect a state against a tyrannical enactment. The extreme protectionists had at last forced him to explain in an elaborate manner what he considered to be the constitutional rights of a state. In short, economic conditions had forced him to take a stand which has been so often misrepresented and misunderstood. Calhoun was prophet and political student enough to see that either disunion or a consolidated government was in store for this country. He really despised

47. Niles' Register, Vol. 34, pp. 351-352.

both possibilities and he set about to prepare an elaborate but plain exposition of our system or Constitution. Mr. Calhoun believed that our happiness and welfare as a nation depended on the observance of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, and he put as much emphasis on the spirit as he did the letter. He loved and venerated the Constitution as the only sure foundation of our Union. He loved and venerated the Union and desired to see it progress and prosper. He desired to save the Union. He did not want to destroy it. However he did not want one section to dominate over the other. He did not desire to see one section prosper and grow rich at the expense of the other section by help of national enactments. He believed that the Union was for the welfare and happiness of all the states. He did not want to see a Delian League grow into an Athenian Empire. Hence his doctrine of interposition. He believed that if the states could not protect themselves that disunion was inevitable. To him the Union could be destroyed by consolidation as well as separation. To destroy the rights of the states and thereby give the Central Government the chief power would destroy our system as established by the Constitution. He did not desire to see consolidation any more than he wished to see separation, but he wanted to preserve the Union under the Constitution as he understood it and as he believed the framers intended.

It is not within my province to take up the Nullification Controversy or to discuss the details of the South Carolina Exposition or the Disquisition on Government but to bring out into relief his national characteristics. The nullification controversy has given Calhoun his place in history as far as the average reader of American History is concerned but this great statesman would be done an injustice to remember him only for that difficulty between Jackson and South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun affirmed again and again through all his political life in his correspondence and public addresses that he had always revered and loved the principles upon which Mr. Jefferson came into power in 1801 and I believe he was sincere in his professions.

Whatever hopes the state of South Carolina had in Andrew Jackson were soon destroyed. Mr. Calhoun said he had no confidence in President Jackson whom he characterized as "too ignorant, too suspicious and too weak to conduct our affairs successfully."⁴⁸ He predicted failure for his administration and he did not see how he could go through six years more. However, Jackson nevertheless served two terms. There was much trouble in store for Mr. Calhoun in Jackson's first term of office. It was then that the President came into the knowledge that Calhoun while secretary of War, had

48. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 290-292.

favored a court-martial for him because of his conduct in the Seminole Ware. This disclosure practically destroyed the South Carolinaian's chances of reaching the Presidency. The Eaton affair also caused bitter feeling between the two men and the influence of Calhoun and South Carolina in the Administration came practically to the vanishing point. Calhoun's only respect for Jackson was that he occupied the President's chair.

When did Calhoun change from an advocate of broad national policies to an open and clear supporter of State Rights? Without question he was on the side of the latter by 1828, but there are indications of a change of heart before that time. I believe that he began to alter his views on the tariff about 1820 and that by 1824 he was opposed to Clay's "American system." It was on the tariff question that he made the first break from his national character. He was considered by John Quincy Adams⁴⁹ and Niles' Register⁵⁰ as the friend of internal improvements all through his term of office in Monroe's Cabinet, but while he was Vice-President he began to doubt the power of the General Government to do anything definite along that line without an amendment to the Constitution. According to Mr. Hunt, Calhoun did not object to a National policy as long as he saw his

49. Adams' Memoirs, Vol. 8, p. 233.

50. Niles' Register, Vol. 35, pp. 82-83.

state prospering under such laws but as soon as he was convinced that such legislation was a positive detriment to his community he turned without reserve to State Rights.

Mr. Calhoun realized the unequal pressure of the law on the various parts of the Union, and the tariff according to his figures⁵¹ was an excellent example of the unequal burden. There is no doubt that Mr. Calhoun desired to see every section of our country in a prosperous and happy condition but he believed that this condition would be impossible if a national law were made to cover all communities regardless of the special needs of certain sections of the country. One can see that Calhoun was not necessarily "Laissez Faire" as far as this principle was concerned. He was aiming at a method to preserve the tariff for those who found it useful and at the same time to make the tariff inoperative in those sections which found it disadvantageous and detrimental. "Nullification" was the effective remedy according to his view. He maintained and asserted the principle of State Rights ~~and~~ to destroy the possibility of national measures but to make such measures most effective. If this principle of Calhoun had been carried out in its theoretical possibilities the Civil War would have been averted in all probability if it had not been for the moral awakening on the slavery question.

51. Calhoun's Correspondence, p. 403.

The extreme abolitionists had no respect for theories or Constitutional provisions which were meant to protect slavery. They wanted it abolished on the principle that it was all wrong regardless of State Rights and the Constitution which had to give way to a so-called "higher law." Mr. Calhoun was a believer in the institution of slavery and he considered the abolitionists of the North nothing less than fanatics. At first thought it would be easy to think that he would have been pleased at Andrew Jackson's proposal to have a National law passed excluding abolition literature from the mails but Mr. Calhoun, true to his theory of State Rights, maintained that it was a matter for the states to judge.⁵² He proposed a law to prohibit postmasters from receiving and sending literature of the abolitionists to a state where the circulation of such literature was forbidden by state law.⁵³ With such a law abolition literature would never find its way into South Carolina or any other strong slave state. Under such a provision the peculiar institutions of a state would always be safe from dangerous reading matter coming in through the post office. Calhoun fully realized what he was advocating when he asserted State Rights. His proposal failed to become law.

52. Calhoun's Works, Vol. 2, p. 533.

53. Hunt's Calhoun, pp. 236-237.

After 1832 sectionalism is strong in Calhoun. It would have been impossible for him to be free from it while the Abolitionists were growing more fearless in their denunciations of the "peculiar institution" of the South. Toward the end of Jackson's administration Calhoun opposed the re-chartering of the United States Bank and became an advocate of Van Buren's Independent Treasury idea. On Sept. 7, 1837 he wrote to James Edward Calhoun that there was a fair opportunity to break the last of their commercial shackles and he said he meant the control which the North through the use of Government credit acting through the banks, has exercised over their industry and commerce. "I have taken my stand. I go against the chartering of a United States Bank, or any connection with Biddles or any other banks."⁵⁴ He was practically of the same mind when he upheld Tyler's veto of the U.S. Bank bill. A friend of the Bank in 1816, he finally became its opponent when it asked for another lease of life. Yet in opposing the bank he showed a national spirit by supporting Van Buren's scheme of an independent treasury which the Whigs opposed.

As to internal improvements his later ideas are set forth in the Report of the Memphis Convention of 1845 in which he virtually declared that the General Government could not build roads and canals.⁵⁵ Whatever could possibly

54. Calhoun's Correspondence, p. 377

55. Hunt's Calhoun, p. 290.

be accomplished by individual effort and state enterprise was to be left to the states, but as has been noted he believed the Mississippi was too stupendous a task for any group of states to manage, consequently its ~~im~~provement was clearly within the control of the General Government.

Mr. Calhoun's Nationalism burst into flame once more when he advocated the annexation of Texas. On December 25, 1843, he wrote to Thomas W. Gilmer the following words: "I believe the annexation of Texas to be necessary to the peace and security of both countries, and will be beneficial to the rest of the civilized world, including Mexico herself. That it is obviously so for Texas and the southern portion of our Union must be admitted by all who will calmly and fairly examine the subject. As to the other portions of our Union North and Northwest, her annexation would open a wide and valuable market for their products, while in a political point of view it could not more than compensate for the vast extension opened to the non-slave holding states to the Pacific on the line of the Oregon. The objection that it would extend our domestic institutions of the south must be met as a direct attack on the compromise of the Constitution, and the highest ground might be taken in opposition to it on our part."⁵⁶ Calhoun evidently wanted to maintain the

56. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 559-560.

equal division of power between the North and South by the Annexation of Texas but he did not believe that the admission of Texas would hurt the North in a commercial way.

In the Presidential campaign of 1844, the Democratic party assumed the positive position of advocating the annexation of Texas and the line of 54° 40' as the northern boundary of Oregon. The Democrats were successful and the result was considered a verdict to acquire Texas. In the meantime President Tyler had made Calhoun Secretary of State in March, 1844 to help bring about this very purpose of acquiring Texas and before Mr. Tyler left office Texas had been annexed by joint resolution.

Mr. Calhoun did not remain in the Cabinet to complete the Oregon negotiation. He wanted an amicable adjustment of the question with England. In fact he regarded Oregon as the really dangerous problem. He did not wish to see the American people get too anxious to acquire all Oregon when they would probably acquire all of it in the future without a war with England. Calhoun on May 30, 1845, wrote to Mr. John Y. Mason that he thought from the beginning that to be quiet, to do nothing, to excite attention, and leave time to operate, was the true policy,--the only one indeed by which we could secure the whole territory, and that the opposite not only involved the hazard of war, but the final

loss of the whole territory.⁵⁷

Calhoun should be commended for his position on the Oregon question. He saw the danger of plunging the United States into two wars at once with the chances of Great Britain's gaining a stronger grasp on the American Continent as a result. The "Fifty-four, forty or fight" cry proved all right for the purposes of a political party in getting votes, but if such a cry had been put into operation the effects might have been extremely hurtful to our interests. on the Pacific coast for Great Britain did not have her hands tied by any great war in 1845 as was the case in 1812-14 when she was fighting Napoleon. In 1846 Calhoun made a speech in the Senate (where he had returned once more in 1845) advocating 49 as the line instead of the famous proposed boundary of 54 40⁵⁸. The line of 49 proved to be the final adjustment and the question was settled honorably and peacefully.

When war broke out with Mexico in the spring of 1846 He opposed the declaration of war. He believed hostilities were brought on unnecessarily by sending Taylor to occupy the disputed territory. When word came of a clash between the American and the Mexican soldiers Polk was eager for

57. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 659-663.

58. Appendix, Congressional Globe, Vol. 16, pp. 471-476

war. Calhoun wanted time to investigate the circumstances. Time was not allowed and he refused to vote for the declaration. "The precipitating ~~of~~ conflict of May, 1846, he insisted, was not war, but merely a collision between troops on the frontier."⁵⁹ The south as a section heartily supported the contest with Mexico but Calhoun saw grave and serious dangers in a war, and his fears were expressed in a letter to Thomas G. Clemson on July 30, 1846 when he wrote that he feared the war would be a pretext for renewing high protective duties. He said that it would offer an opportunity for the display of patriotism and valor, but it would disclose our financial weakness, it would involve us in a heavy debt, it would give a strong central tendency to our system, it would prevent reform and greatly strengthen the spoils principle.⁶⁰ Calhoun evidently feared that the war would bring on a train of evils injurious to the principles he had been fighting for in his public career, especially since 1828. He believed that the institutions of the south (especially slavery and states rights) would not be safe even if the Mexican War should end gloriously with a large addition of territory to the Union, unless certain fundamental principles of our Constitution as he understood it, were preserved intact.

59. Hunt's Calhoun, p. 288.

60. Calhoun's Correspondence, pp. 702-703.

Calhoun was a Nationalist on the Oregon and Texas questions, although he did not manifest the aggressive war spirit of 1812. He saw that a large portion of the North was determined to keep all the territory acquired from Mexico free ground and he now maintained that Congress did not have the power to prohibit slavery in the Territories.⁶¹ In his correspondence with ~~Palmer~~ ~~Ham~~ ~~enham~~ he had virtually come to the conclusion that the power of the General Government must be utilized to defend slavery.⁶² His attitude here has been characterized by saying that he "nationalized the slavery question." The South assumed this attitude in a definite manner when a more stringent fugitive slave law was enacted in 1850 by the National Government.

The many knotty problems occasioned by the Mexican War, the demands of the abolitionists and the uncertainty of the future tended to make Mr. Calhoun something of a pessimist in his last days. Secession talk among some Southerners was already prevalent in private circles. Calhoun did not indulge in the desire for disunion but he wanted to see the Union preserved on the principles which he firmly believed were the intentions of the framers of the Constitution. He did not believe in a brutal majority's overriding the rights of the minority. He realized that if the south was to stay in the Union, her peculiar institution must be guaranteed

61. *Von Holst's Calhoun*, p. 292 et seq.

Hunt's Calhoun, p. 293.

62. *Calhoun's works*, Vol. 5, pp. 333-339.

protection. He did not want to see consolidation any more than he wanted to see disunion, but if all remedies should fail to heal the diseases of our political system, then secession would be the final step. That was Mr. Calhoun's position. Calhoun (according to his idea) was a good Union man but his idea of the Union was that a compact among sovereign states and that idea was soon to be killed by a terrible Civil War. Calhoun did not wish to destroy the Union. He loved the Union but the force of circumstances was taking him along toward disunion although his brainy intellect had tried to impress upon the country a theory which he believed was the only hope of saving the Union. In all probability if he had been living in 1860 he would have joined the Secession Movement but let us give the man credit for wanting to save the Union and for loving the Union as he understood it. Calhoun's Nationalism in the last analysis was not a Nationalism that would bring about uniformity regardless of the special needs of a community but it was a Nationalism that recognized the diversity of interests of a large republic like ours. In theory Calhoun's idea was in a sense ideal, but fate linked his political philosophy with the slavery which was soon to be abolished and finally, Nullification, States Rights, and Slavery all went down to destruction together. But do not dismiss Calhoun with the

Sobriquet of "Nullifier". Let us remember the National measures he so ardently advocated and carried through.

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